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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 006225

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD/DIBBLE;
NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR
DS/IP/NEA;
DRL FOR A/S CRANER; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN;
USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP, PRM FOR DEWEY/GREENE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [GZ](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: FIVE PALESTINIANS KILLED IN GAZA;
ONE PALESTINIAN INJURED AND EIGHT OTHERS ARRESTED IN THE
WEST BANK: DECEMBER, 8, 2004 (1500 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: IDF forces killed five Palestinians in the Gaza strip December 7-8, while the number of injured Palestinians was reportedly as high as 11. One Palestinian was injured in Hebron on December 7, while the IDF arrested eight Palestinians December 7-8 in the West Bank. End Summary.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: A Palestinian in Hebron was seriously injured the evening of December 7 by the premature detonation of an explosive device he was throwing at an Israeli vehicle.

3. (SBU) ARRESTS/SECURITY:

-- Arrests: The IDF arrested eight Palestinians December 7-8, during arrest operations in Nablus, Jenin and the Ramallah area.

-- Clashes/Arrests: Approximately 700 Israelis and Palestinians participated in demonstrations December 7 in Budrus village to protest the building of the separation barrier. Several protestors suffered tear-gas inhalation during clashes with the IDF. Israeli troops arrested at least 40 demonstrators during the clashes, but all were eventually released from custody.

-- The IDF December 8 raided the Hebron office of a Hamas charitable organization. The IDF reportedly ransacked the office and took away several items including computer equipment before leaving.

4. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- PLO Chairman Abu Mazen, Prime Minister Abu Ala,a, and Palestinian Authority (PA) Minister Nabil Sh,ath were scheduled to meet with Lebanese officials December 8 following a two-day visit to Syria.

-- Hasan Khraishah, the acting Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and candidate for PA President, announced December 8 that he would be withdrawing from the presidential race, after facing the prospect of having to resign as acting PLC speaker if he chose to remain a candidate.

Gaza

5. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Death: Israeli media reported that a Palestinian youth was killed by IDF fire overnight December 7-8 on the outskirts of Gaza city.

-- Deaths/Injuries: The total number of Palestinian casualties resulting from clashes that erupted between IDF soldiers and Palestinian militants following the December 6-7 IDF incursion into the area west of Karni crossing is four dead, 11 injured, according to UNRWA. The IDF reported that four Palestinians were injured in the same clashes.

-- Mortars/Rockets: Israeli media reported that two antitank shells were fired at Nissanit settlement in the Gaza strip and a mortar shell was fired at Neve Dekalim in the southern Gaza strip December 8. No injuries or damage occurred in these incidents, although two Israeli children reportedly

suffered from shock in Nissanit. The IDF reported four incidents in which a total of five mortar shells exploded on December 7, near the Nahal Oz crossing and Neve Dekalim. No injuries were reported. According to the IDF, Palestinians launched a Qassam rocket at Kibbutz Saad December 7, but no injuries occurred. Palestinians also launched an anti-tank missile at an IDF bulldozer south of Rafah on December 7, but no injuries occurred.

-- Explosions: Nil.

16. (SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS: Nil.

17. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open December 8, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was open for diplomats, international workers and a limited number of Palestinians on December 8. The exact number of Palestinians crossing into Israel was unavailable.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone remained closed December 8, except for visits by a small number of factory owners.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed December 8 for Palestinian laborers, but open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open December 8, but was reportedly operating slowly.

-- Rafah Terminal was open December 8 for arrivals and departures. Although the IDF no longer prohibits the exit of male Palestinians age 16-35 from the Gaza Strip, lengthy checks at the border mean that few Palestinians in this category are actually able to exit. There are no age restrictions for entry into Gaza.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed December 8. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi December 8.

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